

Message Text

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72

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 /084 W

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R 151347Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6694

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBSSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBSSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O.11652: N/-

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI PRESS ON JORDANIAN-SYRIAN MILITARY MOVES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ISRAELI PRESS MAY 15 GAVE WIDE COVERAGE TO WASHINGTON POST STORY ON SYRIAN PLEDGE TO PROVIDE AIR COVER TO JORDAN AND STATE DEPARTMENT COMMENTS ON SUBJECT. PRESS REPORTS JORDANIAN ASSURANCE TO US THAT MOVEMENT OF FORCES HAVE NO SIGNIFICANCE END SUMMARY.

2. JERUSALEM POST (WOLF BLITZER) REPORTED STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAYING THAT IT HAD NO " OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION" OF WASHINGTON POST STORY THAT SYRIA HAS PLEDGED TO SEND ITS AIR FORCE TO JORDAN TO PROVIDE AIR COVER FOR JORDANIAN TROOPS IN RETURN FOR KING HUSSEIN'S COMMITMENT TO JOIN ANY NEW WAR. WITH ISRAEL. BLITZER ALSO REPORTED DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S REPLY TO QUESTION THAT US DOES NOT HAVE " SECOND THOUGHTS" ABOUT SALE OF HAWK ANTI-MISSILES TO JORDAN.

3. AFTER EXTENSIVE COVERAGE OF THE WASHINGTON POST STORY,
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BLITZER REPORTED"...THERE IS A GROWING MOOD IN CONGRESS TO

BLOCK THE HAWK DEAL(WITH JORDAN) AND THE WASHINGTON POST REVELATION IS LIKELY TO ENCOURAGE SEVERAL PRO-ISRAELI CONGRESSMEN TO OPPOSE THE SALE." BLITZER CITED STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES BINGHAM AND ROSENTHAL CRITICIZING SALE OF HAWKS TO JORDAN.

4. WASHINGTON POST STORY AND DEPARTMENT'S COMMENT ALSO FRONT-PAGES MSOT HEBREW LANGUAGE PAPERS.

5. MAARIV'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT (SEGEV) REPORTD THAT "THE JORDANIN GOVERNEMTN YESTERDAY NOTIFID THE US MILITRY ATTACHE IN AMMAN THATTHE MOVEMENT OF ARMOR FORCES ALONG THE JORDAN WAS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF 'SMAL EXERCISES'. THE MESSAGE SAID THAT THESE MOVEMENTS MUST NOT BE REGARDED AS SIGNIFYING INTENTIONS TO ATTACK ISRAEL." SEGEN CONTINUES, " IT IS ASSUMED THAAAT THE CLARIFICATIONS WERE TRANSMITTED TO ISRAEL. NO GREAT SIGNIFICANCE IS STTRIBUTED IN WASHINGTON TO ARMY MOVEMENTS IN JORDAN AND THE STATMENT OF ISRALIE MINSER OF DEFENSE PERS ON THE SUBJECTIS DESCRIBED AS ' GREATLY EXAGGERATED'. IT CANNOT BE ASSUMED THAT JORDAN WILL ATTACK ISREL WHILE SYRIA AND EGYTP ARE ENGAGED IN A DISPUTE."

6. AMERICAN OFFICIAL, ACCORDING TO SEGEV, MAINTAIN THAT TALKS BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIAN ON MILITARY COOPERATION HAVE NOT GONE BEYOND THE PRIMARY PLANNING STAGE, AND THERE ARE NO SIGNS WHICH CONFIRM REPORTS REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JONT COMMAND OR THE STATIONING OFSYRIAN TROOPS IN JORDAN.

7. MAARIV' MILITARY CORRESPONDENT REPORTED THAT " JORDAN CONTINED YESTERDAY (MAY 1) TO MOVE TROOPS INTO THE EASTERN JORDAN VALLEY FROM THE MOUNTAINS...THE JORDANIANS ARMY ADVANCED TROOPS TO THE WESTERN AREA OF THE MOUNTINAS, SO THAT THEY COULD BE SPEEDILY MOVED TO THE JORDAN VALLEY... ACCORDING TO ALL THE SIGNS, THE TRANSFER OF THE ARMY UNITS WASINTENDED TO STREGTHEN THE JORDANIN BORDR LINE SO THAT JORDAN COULDTAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN AWAR OR ATTRITION FIGHTING. THE RECENT ARMY MOVEMENTS PROVE THAT IT IS NOT A TEMPORARY OPERATION..."

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8. HAARETZ' POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT REPORTED CONCERN IN JERUSALEM ABOUT JORDANIAN TROOP MOVEMENTS NEAR TH BORDER INVOLVING REINFORCEMENTS OF MANPOWER AND MATERIAL. WHILE THE FEELING IS THAT THIS IS A TEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT, CONCERN IS COMPOUNDED BY THE SYRIAN PROMISE TO PROVIDE JORDAN WITH AN IR UMBRELLA IN CASE OFANOTHR WAR. THIS, IT IS BELIEVED, REFLECTS A JORDANINA-SYRIAN RAPPROCHEMENT, THOUGH IT IS NOT BELEIVED THAT THI TREND WILL INCREASE

MEANINGFULLY.

9. IN SOMBER COMMENTARY ON PRESPECTS FOR WAR, MAARIV'S MILITARY CORRESPONDENT (EREZ) CITED A NUMBER OF WORRISOME DEVELOPMENTS: JORDANINA ARMOR UNITS IN JORDAN VALLEY FOR FIRST TME SINCE OCTOBER 1973 WAR, INDICATIONS THAT MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA IS BE-COMINGSTEADILY CLOSER, INCREASED TERRORIST CONCENTRATION IN SOUTH LEBANON FOLLOWING FALANGE-PLO TRUCE, REHABILITTION OF JORDAN ARMY, COMPLETION OF DIVISION-LEVEL MANEUVERS BY SYRIAN ARMY, ACQUISITION OF NEW EQUIPMENT BY SYRIAN AND CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL FORTIFICATIONS IN SYRIA.

10. EREZ CLAIMED THAT TOP ISRAELI MILITARY CIRCLES--EVEN BEFOR REPORTS OFIDF ACTIVITY--HAVE BEEN EXPECTING INCREASED TENSION,CULMINATING BY JUNE 5-- AND POSSIBLY ESCALALTING TO DEGREE OF ATTRITION ACTIVITES.THE IDF IS FOLLOWIN SITUATION CLOSELY, EREZ REPORTED AND MAY HAVE TO CALL UP RESERVES, IN SPITE OF DAMAGE TO ECONOMY. VELIOTES

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